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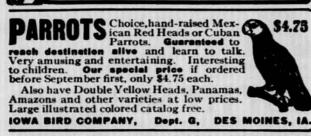
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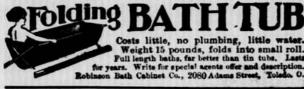
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STALKING THE SHERIFF

Continued from page

gently. Wal, she wouldn't marry me any- ing of the horse had not awakened his man. way after I've laid out that Maverick-an' he's simply got to die!"

that, though Pearl Bassett had seemed to of the sun which was just appearing over the love him, she was not partizan enough to top of the ridge. But still the Sheriff did not share in his wish for revenge. Women were move. He lay there as one dead in the strange creatures. Perhaps even now she shadow of the rock. was on the way to warn Steve that his enemy was free and would soon be upon his It's too blamed easy!" He wormed his way trail. She baffled his understanding. Too to within a dozen yards of the man on the bad! But in a year or so she might change ground. MacFarland was lying on his side, her mind. He prayed that she might; but his head cushioned on his right arm, while nothing could change him in his fierce lust the other lay stretched across his chest. for the life of the man who had sworn him into prison.

streaks were beginning to appear above the mesa at the opening of the cañon; but it was not yet light enough for him to pick his way up the side gulch among the rocks and way up the side gulch among the rocks and with 'em!" Then a quick shiver ran over the avenger's form. "Great Jehoshaphat!

campfire. For three days he had cursed his the man to death? If so, it was no wonder luck and cleaned his Winchester in his fruit- he did not hear the neighing of his horse nor less search for the lone horseman whom he the snapping of the twig. He gazed sharply knew was somewhere in the wilderness of at the Sheriff. Now he was so near that he sand, mesquit, and heat-stabbed mesas that could see the rise and fall of the gray blanket lay to the southward. And now he had lo-

little sensitive to early morning canon drafts. ing up. He drew his blanket closer about his shoulders, and with his chin on his palms stared up into the gulch with unseeing eyes, just as he had stared from the edge of his prison cot, gazing blankly at the wall before him. Some ready to be astir, as was doubtless the Sherical Market Close and the sherical starts and the starts are the sherical starts are the sherical starts are the sherical starts are the starts are the sherical starts how he had felt that vitascopic scene of the iff. If he made the slightest move, his face cañon trail would be the true picture. A loud "Hello!" would bring the Sheriff upon might be pierced by anyone or a dozen of one elbow,—Shorty drew the line at shoot- the scores of deadly stingers of the scorone elbow,—Shorty drew the line at shooting a sleeping man,—but before the hand of the startled man could reach his holster a Aga bullet would send him back upon his blanket to sleep into eternity.

It was light enough to travel now. Regan would be stung to death. shook the sand out of his blanket, folded it his hair as close to the middle as the dim desert to shoot the Sheriff as he slept. light of four in the morning would permit. Then he rose and went over to where his blades of withered bunch grass. A few minutes' further preparation found him ready for the trail. He would breakfast later, maybe out of the Sheriff's kit. There would be a can of condensed milk, he knew, and in his coffee.

It was a little darker in the deep gulch, rough spots. It would be an hour's ride to the Sheriff's camp; but there would be The fresh hoofmarks, readily noted here and there by his range-trained eyes, would lead him to the place. Up through the straggly piñons his pony climbed steadily. In the gray sky overhead all but a few of the brightest stars had faded from view. Once a covote slunk across his path; but no other living creature entered his vision.

PIVE o'clock and broad daylight found the edge of the dry creekbed. Screened by a cottonwood thicket a few hundred yards farther up the gulch was the spring beside which the Sheriff had stopped for the night. It was not the first time Regan had visited the place, and he lost little time threading stick. No, he might brush off two or three his way up through the brush.

A horse grazing at the end of a picket rope nickered softly. In an instant the blue bar-National Mushroom Co., Dept. 2, Hyde Park, Mass. | gray rock; but it did not move. The neigh- scorpion. They had placed their prisoner in | WATSON E. COLEMAN, Patent Lawyer, 622 F St., WASHINGTON, D.C.

Regan crept nearer. A twig cracked sharply under his foot as he rose behind a rock, and It was hard for Shorty Regan to think quickly the rifle barrel gleamed in the light

"Sound asleep," muttered Shorty. "Sho!

Of a sudden Shorty caught sight of a number of dark brown patches on the Sheriff's gray blanket. Other patches of the SHORTY REGAN yawned, stretched his same kind freckled the arm and the collar saddle-wearied legs, and sat up. Gray of the light woolen suit he wore. What

last night his aching eyes had made out the campfire of Steve MacFarland.

For three days Regan had scanned the desert and the foothills for the smoke of that robbed him of his revenge? Had they stung where it swathed the sleeper's breast. That cated his man! was good. His man was unharmed; he was sleeping peacefully, and not dreaming of the ing air. Two years in prison makes a man a double menace of death that waited his ris-

> Shorty understood. The creatures, chilled by the nipping night air, had crept upon the and neck and his bare wrists and hands

Again the eager onlooker shivered convulsively. The flashed through his mind the picture of a dead Sonoran he had once Shorty shivered again. It was not pleas-ant to meet death only half awake; but the man deserved it: he had courted just such into which the poison had entered. He a death when he swore him into the pen for knew that the strong human pulse could refifteen years. And, more than that, he sist and the system react against the venom knew that the Sheriff was out for him now of one or two of these alert, little, lobsterand had vowed to take him alive or dead. It shaped animals; but such a multitudinous was merely Shorty's good luck that he had doubled upon MacFarland's trail, and that the pursuer, though he did not know it, had become the pursued.

Sheriff's slightest movement could hardly be withstood. In other words, it was Shorty's conclusion that if the sleeper moved he

The shadow of the rock was growing neatly, and carefully rolled it up. Then he shorter. Its rim was only a foot from Macwashed his face at the water hole, and by the Farland's face and was creeping steadily aid of his pocket mirror he combed his hair toward him through the grass. When the and brushed it neatly. If he should merely sun should blaze down on his closed eyelids wing his man and should be shot down him- he would open them and sit up. By that self, he would look clean and fit when borne time the poison would begin to course into town, and that was a great point with through his veins. A bullet would be more so tidy a man as Shorty Regan. He parted merciful. But Shorty had not crossed the

Despite the one or two feminine touches in his nature. Shorty was a hard man. His hobbled mustang was cropping the scant life in the land of sun-parched desert, barbed wire, and cactus had had anything but a softening effect upon him. Coyotes that stole his provisions, angry rattlesnakes that struck at his shaps, and Sheriffs who interfered with his liberty were things to be got that was good; for he liked condensed milk rid of and despatched in the quickest way

But there was something about the helpand his horse stumbled repeatedly over the lessness of the man in the shadow of the rock that appealed to him in a way that few things had ever done before. He was not plenty of time to get there before sunrise. afraid of death nor appalled by the spectacle of it; but somehow the impending fate of the man before him made his flesh creep. There was something clean and wholesome about a bullet, even though it plumped through your brain; but these crawling, stinging things!

"Ugh!" Shorty flung up his arm and shook all over. A fly had crawled across the back of his hand.

"Hang it all!" he muttered. "I'm getting Regan tying his horse to a sapling at to be a regular old woman; but I sure can't stand this!'

> ONE thing must be done, and that was to get those scorpions off of MacFarland before he awoke. Shorty looked about for a that way; but he would be sure to waken the Sheriff.

For a moment he stood nonplussed. Then rel of Shorty's Winchester covered the form he remembered a trick of some Mexican beneath the brown blanket beside the big children he had seen teasing a captured List of Inventions Wanted. FREE E



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